

Industry Mill
Van Houten and Prospect Streets
Paterson, New Jersey
Passaic County

HAER No. NJ-15

HAER
NJ,
16-PAT
17-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

ADDENDUM
FOLLOWS...

Historic American Engineering Record
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

INDUSTRY MILL

NJ-15

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DATE: 1878-79

LOCATION: Van Houten and Prospect Streets

DESIGNED BY: unknown

OWNER: unknown

SIGNIFICANCE: The Industry Mill was, like many others in Paterson, used throughout the nineteenth century for the manufacture of textiles and textile goods. Unlike many of the mill buildings, however, the Industry Mill does not seem to have served as a machine shop at any time. In the early decades of the century, this mill was used for the manufacture of cotton goods. In 1879 a silk mill was added to the cotton mill.

TRANSMITTED BY: Monica E. Hawley, Historian, 1983

THE INDUSTRY MILL

The following is the result of a deed search done at the time of the survey:

"All that certain mill lot of land known as the Industry Mill, situated on the lower raceway of the Society for Establishing Useful Manufactures on the north side of Boudinot Street in the City of Paterson, ...that is to say:

Beginning for the same on the north side of said Street at the southwest corner of the mill lot now or lately known as the Beaver Mill lot, at a stone or monument placed in the bottom of the canal near the center of the head race in a line with the front of the wall on the north side of the canal in said Street and running thence along the west line of said Beaver Mill lot north 21 degrees west four hundred feet to a stone monument placed with about fifty feet of the present margin of the river; thence south 69 degrees west one hundred feet to the line of a lot originally lease to Henry Godwin now in the occupancy of W. Haight; thence south 21 degrees east four hundred feet to the line of the aforesaid canal in Boundinot Street; thence north 69 degrees east one feet to the place of beginning."

The Industry Mill Lot was first assigned to Timothy Crane by the SUM in a lease dated 1811.² Stipulating a "full term of 14 years for the purpose of a grist and saw mill and no other, at a year rent of \$50.00", the lease also granted Crane the right of using 12 sq. inches of water from the lower race. Trumbull cites Mr. Vreeland, "and others [who] remember when great piles of logs were skidded up there, on the river bank, waiting their turn at the saw."³ In a suit brought against Crane in 1827 by Robert Morell, the lease was ordered sold, and Morell subsequently bought it at auction for \$4,000.⁴ After the term of Crane's original lease had expired, the SUM leased the mill lot to Dr. William Ellison and Daniel Ridgeway in 1827.⁵ Charging \$650 per year rent, the SUM granted the Industry Mill Lot the use of 288 sq. inches of water. The lease was immediately assigned to Morell.⁶ After the mill had been vacated by Crane, it had been changed into a cotton manufactory and saw mill under the proprietorship of William Ridgeway and William Dickey.⁷

In 1849, the Society sold the mill lot to Roswell Colt as part of a \$125,000 package with the privilege of using 2 Sq. feet of water, for an annual rent of \$650.⁸ The property was conveyed the following day to Charles and Thomas Oliver, and Robert M. Gibbes, executors of the estate of Robert Oliver, Colt's father in law who, acting under the provisions of Oliver's will, transferred the property to themselves in capacity as trustees of Margaret Colt and her children, Robert Oliver's daughter and grandchildren.⁹

Morell died in 1852, and his estate sold the lease to Henry M. Low in 1853 for \$20,000.¹⁰ Low, a cotton manufacturer, followed Messrs. Taggart and Morris as occupant of the Industry Mill lot. By the end of the decade, Low's mill had 65 employees using 2,500 spindles to turn 7,000 pounds of cotton into yarn each week.¹¹

Between 1850 and 1870, both the progressions of the lease and ownership of the Industry Mill lot were somewhat byzantine, both changing hands in a flurry of deaths, estates, executors, and trustees. The next important shift in title occurred in 1877, when, as a result of a complaint by Low's widow, the syndicate which had purchased the lot from his estate was forced to sell the lease to the highest bidder in order to settle Mary Low's claims. At an auction held on June 2, 1877, Robert and Henry Adams purchased the lease on the Industry Mill for \$22,000.¹³ Scions of the firm of William Adams and Co., silk manufacturers, the brothers had occupied other mills; the Harmony, which had burned in 1869 and been rebuilt, and the Essex, in which the firm had expanded. Upon leasing the Industry Mill, the Adams tore down the original mill and built a new one. With the retirement of Robert Adams in 1879, Henry Adams became the sole lessee of the Industry Lot.¹⁴ That same year the Industry Silk Mill was built on front of the Industry Cotton Mill¹⁵ and in December 1880, "an extension to the Harmony Cotton Mill was commenced, 59'X68', with an L extending across the Industry Lot, 45'X68", all four stories throughout...New Machinery of the very best character was placed in this mill and several new branches were added, such as the manufacture of silerias, wiggins, cambrics, and other materials...A new boiler house has been built adjoining the Harmony Mill, between that and the Industry, which is one of the finest in the city..."¹⁶ Despite the extensive building program, the firm was forced to release the leasehold for

the Industry Mill in 1882 for the benefit of their creditors, which was returned two years later with the agreement that the creditors receive 55% of the amount owed them.¹⁷ Eventually, the mill leasehold was sold in 1897 by the sheriff to the Paterson Savings Institution, who had issued the defaulted \$200,000 mortgage in 1888.¹⁸

The Paterson Savings Institution, which already held the leasehold on the mill, purchased the property outright in 1898 for \$22,150 from the descendants of Margeret Colt.¹⁹

In 1910, the Institution leased from the SUM the right to build over the lower raceway, for the sum of one dollar a year.²⁰ Bernard Grobart purchased the mill from the Paterson Savings Institution in 1919, for about \$220,000.²¹ The property was conveyed to Anbern Security Company by the descendants of Grobart in 1939.²²

Industry Mill:

1. "Abstract of Meyer Grobart, et als, As To Property on Van Houten Street, Paterson, New Jersey, known as the Industry Mill", p. 2.
2. Essex County Deeds, D. 384.
3. Trumbull, p. 54.
4. Essex County Deeds, H 173.
5. Essex County Deeds, F 114.
6. Passaic County Deeds, F 119.
7. Trumbull, p. 54.
8. Passaic County Deeds, D 198.
9. Passaic County Deeds, D 244.
10. Passaic County Deeds, U 11.
11. Manufacturers of Paterson, Sci. Am., p. 314.
12. Passaic Deeds. V-5, p. 22.
13. Passaic Deeds, G-6 217.
14. Trumbull, p. 209-210.
15. Ibid., 209-210.
16. Passaic Deeds, T-7, p. 308.
17. Passaic Deeds, X-12, p. 6.
18. Passaic Deeds, B-13, p. 601-605.
19. Lease dated Feb. 1, 1910, not recorded, cited in title abstract.
20. Passaic Deeds, Q-27, p. 84.
21. Passaic Deeds, Z-40, p. 352.

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